

REMARKS:

Claims 1-4 are pending in the application. In the Office Action dated June 20, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP-11291735 (JP'735) in view of Hamilton et al.

In this amendment, claim 1 is amended to recite that the cylinder comprises an upper and a lower chamber; the piston divides said upper and lower chambers; and the air passage is for connecting the upper chamber and the lower chamber so that air in the upper chamber and the lower chamber can be circulated. Support for these amendments can be found in the FIGs, which illustrate air passage 34 connecting upper and lower chambers of cylinder 12, which are divided by piston 14.

In the final Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the portion of element 31 in JP'735 referred to as corresponding to the inventive air passage connects an upper side and a lower side of the cylinder in that it connects the upper and lower surfaces of element 23. Element 31 of JP'735 does not connect two chambers of cylinder 22 that are divided by a piston. Amended claim 1, as well as its dependents, claims 2-4, is thus patentable over JP'735.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Authorization is granted to charge any outstanding fees due at this time for the continued prosecution of this matter to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP Deposit Account No. 50-0310 (matter no. 060945-0145).

Respectfully submitted,



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